

Good News from Neighborhoods

While attending his father's funeral in Minnesota earlier this year, Cascade Neighborhood Association resident Frank Mattingly had a vision: To create a teen youth center in his neighborhood...

something more than just a "hang-out" center. He pictured a place where kids could experience artistic and musical expression, gain academic assistance, enjoy companionship and realize the importance of giving back to their community. "By providing activities that help build their self worth, kids realize that they can be more than what they realize they are," explained Frank. With a tight budget and many hours spent researching potential sites around the Cascade area, Frank discovered a facility willing to donate space to help make this vision a reality. The Word of Life Church has a downstairs area primarily used for their youth group and was willing to open its doors to house this neighborhood youth center. "This area is perfectly situated between Lindbergh High School and Nelson Middle School. Many kids walk right by this spot on their way home from school." said Frank. He named the center the ARC based on his father's ministry, *Noah's ARC*. "Anyone from grades 6 to 12 is welcome but there is definitely a spiritual component to the ARC!" he added. At the ARC, there are various activities such as ping-pong, foosball, air-hockey, beading, video games, guitars and drums for jamming sessions and a small outdoor basketball court. For a small fee, kids can purchase a light snack. Music is a big element of the ARC and generally once a week youth bands are invited to play at the center. There is also an area which will soon house sixteen computers where kids can do research or homework. With help from volunteers, a tutoring program hopes to be implemented in the fall. Frank also plans to offer exposure to computer graphics and digital photography. "As a freelance graphic artist, I want to pass on my skills to the next generation," he mentioned. In addition to the donated space by Word of Life Church, the ARC is currently funded through donations from individuals and neighboring churches, volunteers and some pending grants. The ARC has been open Monday through Friday after school from 2 to 5pm. They will not operate during the summer but will reconvene in September with a grand opening celebration. For more information visit their website at www.arcyouthcenter.com



Jam session at the ARC



Pot luck dishes at Sierra Heights District picnic

Picnic Potluck Recipes Wanted!

Picnic season is underway and we are beginning to compile recipes for our online cookbook of favorite potluck recipes! We ask that if you prepare a special dish for your picnic, please bring the recipe for it (including your name and neighborhood). A Neighborhood Program "recipe box" will be at each picnic and additional cards will be available to write your recipe on if you forget to bring it. We look forward to tasting your delicious dishes...and sharing them! Look for them to be posted on our website soon at <http://rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=2226>

Get to Know Our Neighborhood Liaisons



Bonnie, always looking for volunteers!

Chances are if you have participated in a City of Renton volunteer project, you have met Bonnie Rerecich as she helps match community volunteers with opportunities in the city. Bonnie, a

long-time Neighborhood Program liaison, is the Resource and Funding Manager for the City and has worked in the Community Services Department for 31 years! Prior to her current

position, Bonnie spent 24 years in the Recreation division working with special needs programs and neighborhood recreation programs in the parks. She planned programs for all ages and ultimately ran the Renton Community Center. "That provided me with a broad knowledge of the City which helped me when I first started out as a liaison," remembers Bonnie. "It felt good to be able to help a resident work through the City system," she added. Through her work with citizen involvement Bonnie is partial to the volunteer aspect of the Neighborhood Program. She enjoys viewing the process of neighbors collectively planning a project or picnic, then seeing the end result. Bonnie has had the distinct pleasure of working directly with many of our residents and neighborhoods through the city's volunteer program. When she hears the word "volunteer" she searches out a place where help is needed or seeks out people who would like to lend a hand! One of Bonnie's favorite aspects of being a liaison is attending her neighborhood picnics where she might occasionally lead a "Simon Says" game!

"Neighbors come together to volunteer, socialize, celebrate and discuss issues," she stated. "Then they can bring their concerns to the attention of the City and partner in solving the problem!" Over the years, being a liaison has given Bonnie the opportunity to connect with other divisions in the City which has helped her in her position today. When Bonnie is not working she enjoys

spending time with her family and dabbling in watercolor paints. "Put me anywhere by the water and in the sun and I am happy!" exclaimed

Bonnie, smiling. We're happy because Bonnie is one of our liaisons!

Bonnie enjoys attending her neighborhood picnics where she might lead a "Simon Says" game!

Summer Happenings

Return to Renton Car Show

Sunday, July 11, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

(Downtown South 3rd St.)

More information at www.GORenton.com

Moonlight Movies

Fridays, July 23 through August 20

Seating begins at 7 p.m., Movies begin at dusk

More information at www.rentonwa.gov

Downtown Renton Arts & Antique Walk

Saturday, August 28, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

(South 3rd St. area)

More information at www.artsunlimited.org

IKEA Renton River Days 2010 Festival Highlights

- Thursday, July 22, Senior Day BBQ
Renton Community Center
11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Saturday, July 24, Parade
South 3rd St., Downtown Renton
10 a.m.
- Sunday, July 25, Rubber Ducky Derby
Launched from the Houser Street Bridge
4:30 p.m.

If your neighborhood is interested in being in the parade, or you would like more information on the Festival, please visit

www.rentonriverdays.org

Renton International Festival & Night Market

(A new modern & multi-ethnic cultural celebration!)

August 13 through 15

Viet Wah Plaza in the greater Renton Highlands
(2820 Sunset Blvd)

For more information, times and events, visit
www.rentonfest.com

Renton Library Transformation

Perhaps you've had a chance to visit the Renton libraries and have noticed some changes.

We were privileged to hold our June Neighborhood Quarterly Leadership Meeting at the Downtown library and learned first hand about some of the upgrades happening at our libraries. Both branches of the library have undergone some major transformations and have expanded their hours of service since they have become part of King County Library System (KCLS). "The Highlands branch has seen a 56% increase in activity since the hours have been extended," stated Angelina Benedetti, KCLS Library Cluster Manager. The library entryways are open and welcoming and new carpet blankets the floors. Once inside you notice new furniture, a cozy children's section, lots of new materials, self-check-out stations and a huge increase in the number of computers.

"Computers are great public resources," explained Angelina. "We see people working on resumes, completing immigration papers, researching jobs, checking emails and using our online appendix," she added. Both libraries offer a meeting room for groups to use (providing nothing is bought or sold) and can be reserved online. In addition to offering a book "group" and an early literacy program, KCLS will be bringing their ABC Express "library on wheels" to certain neighborhood picnics and to the Farmers Market on selected days promoting their summer reading program. KCLS is reaching out to residents and recently formed Friends of Renton Libraries, a volunteer support group focusing on planning programs and raising awareness of the library's role in the community. "We are very excited to be here and really want to connect to the Renton community," stated Angelina. Many of the faces behind the counters at the libraries are still familiar. If you visit the Downtown library, you might recognize Aaron Oesting, the site manager, as one of our past neighborhood liaisons! "The change-over has gone very well," noted Aaron. "I'm excited for the many opportunities that KCLS is bringing to Renton!"

For more information on the Renton libraries and/or to reserve a meeting room, visit www.kcls.org

Researching Your Older Home



The George W. Custer home on Wells Ave. in 1904

Residents of King County with older homes are very lucky to have access to an extraordinary collection of information at the Puget Sound Regional Archives at Bellevue Community

College. Between 1937 and 1972 the county tax assessor's office kept detailed records of every property in the county, compiled on "property record cards." These cards record the construction date of the home; a sketch of the site plan with measurements; descriptions of construction materials and fixtures; and best of all, one or more photos taken from 1937 forward. Property record cards often include some ownership information. This information is a wonderful jumping-off point for further research.

My own home in North Renton is an example of what you can learn. The property record card listed Gladys Steele as the owner when it was built in 1941. Now that I had her name I could check Renton city directories for the years following 1941. I found that she remained at the same address until the 1970s. I also discovered that she was a teacher at Renton High School. From yearbooks I learned that she was a math and science teacher, and she had also taught at Sartori and Renton Junior High. Census records further flushed out her story: she was either widowed or divorced by 1920, and she lived with her daughter and son-in-law in an apartment on Park Avenue North until she built her little house around the corner. I was even able to find Gladys's yearbook photo.

You will need your plat number for the Archives to pull your card. For more information about the Archives' resources, go to http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/archives_puget.aspx. Other resources—city directories, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, high school yearbooks, old newspapers—are available at the Renton History Museum. Census records are available on-line at the Renton Public Library. Starting with the property record card, you can piece together a rich history of your home.

*-Elizabeth P. Stewart, Manager,
Renton History Museum*



Neighbor To Neighbor

Editor, Wendy Kirchner

Neighborhood Program Staff

Norma McQuiller
Neighborhood Program
Coordinator
425-430-6595

nmcquiller@rentonwa.gov

Wendy Kirchner
Neighborhood Program
Assistant
425-430-6594

wkirchner@rentonwa.gov

www.rentonwa.gov



Neighborhood Volunteer Opportunity

Did you know that our storm drains lead directly to creeks, streams, rivers and ultimately Puget Sound? In the upcoming months the City of Renton will be installing “Puget Sound Starts Here” storm drain markers throughout neighborhoods in an effort to help educate the public about the importance of protecting our waterways. This public information and community involvement program hopes to help citizens understand about how the stormwater system functions, and how people’s behaviors are essential to preventing pollutants from entering the region’s waterways. These colorful storm drain markers are intended to remind citizens to not place pollutants into the storm drains. The markers are an important tool to help protect our waterways.

The City is looking for volunteers to help affix these markers throughout Renton in the coming months. Here is an opportunity for your neighbors, friends, youth and church groups to learn about protecting our environment and waterways! If you’d like to help place markers in your neighborhood or throughout the city, please contact Edward Mulhern at 425-430-7323 or email emulhern@rentonwa.gov.

Learn more about the drain marker volunteering and the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign: <http://rentonwa.gov/government/default.aspx?id=26376>

Some things we can all do to protect our waterways include:

Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a surface that does not drain to the street (& storm drains)

Inspect your car regularly and fix any leaks to avoid contamination

Recycle motor oil or other fluids rather than pour down the storm drains

Pick up after pets and properly dispose of pet waste in the trash

Use less fertilizer and pesticides on your lawn

Avoid applying fertilizers or pesticides on sidewalks, driveways, streets, or near storm drains or ditches

Neighbors helping Neighbors



Cascade neighborhood graffiti clean-up crew

Recently about a dozen kids from the ARC youth center (part of the Cascade Neighborhood Association) participated in a graffiti clean-up project near the Cascade Park. A privately owned fence bordering the sidewalk which leads into the park was covered with graffiti. The property owner was physically unable to remove the graffiti herself. Resident Frank Mattingly learned about this situation and contacted Carlene Balcomb-Bartok, the City of Renton’s Graffiti Abatement Coordinator. She made arrangements to bring the materials needed to remove graffiti and met the group on a sunny Friday afternoon at the site. For the next few hours the kids painted the fence masking all the remains of any graffiti. “They worked really hard and you could tell that they really care about their neighborhood,” remarked Carlene. “The kids were full of pride from physically doing a project while helping to improve their community!” added Frank. “They definitely want to do more of this.” These kids experienced first-hand “Neighbors helping Neighbors!”